

INTERVIEW OF JUDY BONNER

by Evelyn Oppenheimer, book reviewer, KKHI Radio, San Francisco, March 14, 1970. (About 9 minutes.) Taped and transcribed verbatim, except for minor hesitations, by P. Hoch. (Introduction missed.)

(JB) Well, Evelyn, this is not just another book about the assassination; it's much more. It's a book which tells the only official story, which has never been told, and that is the step by step investigation of the assassination - of the homicide - of John F. Kennedy by the Dallas Police Department, how the police department almost singlehandedly tracked down, captured, and proved their case against Lee Harvey Oswald.

(EO) Well, that's a matter of tremendous interest, I think, which has been sadly overlooked, as you bring out so wonderfully well in the book, in focusing on it. Here's a big metropolitan area, whatever city it might have been in, and something like this happens, and in an hour and twenty-two minutes, wasn't it?

(JB) Exactly

(EO) ... a local police department tracks down the suspect ...

(JB) ... an unknown assailant, because unlike the other assassinations they had no information to go on at the time ... he was practically unseen, he escaped to another location, and the fact that they were able to do this, in this sort of record time, I think was a remarkable case in criminology, and I think one which needed to be told, and I felt furthermore that it needed to be told by a Dallas writer, someone who was familiar with the case, with the Police Department, and with Dallas. No other book has been written by a Dallas writer, and I felt this was most important, and as a former Dallas newspaper woman and ... I was able to do this and to get the information ...

(EO) Well, I happen to know that it was not easy, and that you had some very difficult experiences in getting this material before your writing ever began ...

(JB) Yes, that's correct, and perhaps I should point out that this book is in no way an official book of or by the Police Department, it was not commissioned by Dallas or by the Police Department, it's not an attempt to excuse or heroize or whitewash the Police Department, because they did make mistakes, obviously, but they also did a fine job, and in attempting to get the information I first went to the officials of the Police Department, the highest officials, and told them what my idea was, and I wished to write this book, and they said - refused to cooperate officially, they said everything that they had wanted to report (sic) was in the Warren Commission, and had been given to the Warren Commission Report, and that was all that they were able to give out, so I had to go underground in a sense, and fortunately I had many, many contacts in the Police Department, and I went to the men, to the officers who had actually been on the scene that fateful day, November 22, 1963, to the dispatchers who manned the police radio when this was all happening, and to the officers who participated in the capture of Oswald, and to those who interrogated him, and were involved in the entire investigation, and to those who prepared the case that would have gone to the District Attorney, and would have served as a basis for the trial, had he lived.

(EO) Uh-huh; well, in these days when police departments all over the country are under so much critical fire, I think it's extremely interesting, too, to read something which presents factually the working, and the very successful working, of a local police department in a metropolitan area under crucial conditions.

(JB) That's true; I think that a quotation which I've used in the front of the book best explains the reason for the book and the whole idea, and that is a statement which was made by a prominent officer in the Police Department, which says that no police department in the world knows how to investigate the assassination of a President, but we do know how to investigate a homicide, and we did a good job.

(EO) I think that one of the very fine sections in your book, too, Judy, which is of tremendous interest and value, is a section you devote to pointing out the errata, the mistakes, which have been made by other writers in other books. Would

you mind telling our listeners a bit about some of those?

(JB) Yes; there have been, oh, some three dozen books written about the Kennedy assassination, and they range from the sublime to the ridiculous. Some of them are totally inaccurate, and I felt that the gross errors in this, particularly as they related to the Police Department's investigation, needed to be told, and I have set these errors out, and pointed out the correct information, which is in my book. Just as an example, there's one writer who wrote a factual - so-called factual book, which is in some cases factual, but had many errors in it, one of them that he stated that he could prove conclusively that President Kennedy was not shot from the School Book Depository because the police officer who was riding escort to the Presidential car was not splattered with blood, and he attempted to prove through diagrams that, has the bullets come from behind, he would have been splattered. Well, I interviewed this police officer at the time of the assassination, and again later in writing this book, and he definitely was splattered with blood, and this is part of the official information that's given in my book. That's just one example ...

(EO) And of course that's only one of many. I found it very interesting too, the great quantity of illustration material ~~there~~ which you have which I have not seen in other books.

(JB) Yes. The book contains every official police department photograph, the photographs that were taken by the Police Department at the time of the - when they first swarmed into the School Book Depository moments after the shots were fired, all the official police photographs of the suspect's belongings, of the searches that were made of his various residences, and background photographs that were taken from his possessions at the time of his arrest, all the official photographs plus many, many pictures that were taken by our local newspapers on that day, are contained in the book, and some of these have never been published before. Some have previously been - there are many that have never been seen before.

(EO) Uh-hm. Well, you also have some very interesting and some very valuable other material in the appendix, the very extended appendix, to the book.

(JB) Well, I think perhaps one of the most important things in the book is for the first time we did the complete "B-sheets" (?), which is the complete official case against Lee Harvey Oswald, compiled by the Dallas Police Department, and had the prisoner lived to trial, these would have formed the basis for his trial by the district attorney, and these include the official affidavits of every witness, the photographs previously mentioned, all the evidence of searches and seizures, and all the other material that is relevant (? - unclear) to the case is contained totally, and some of this is not even in the Warren Report.

(EO) I know that it would take a long time to answer this question; besides, we don't want to answer it fully because you do a beautiful job of that in the book, but just very briefly, in a very condensed way, would you mind telling our audience something about your own conclusions, which you have come to as a private investigator and writer, so to speak.

(JB) Well, I state in the book that basically I agree with the Warren Report, in that Lee Harvey Oswald was the lone assassin of John F. Kennedy, incredible as it may seem, and I believe in this book, with the summary of evidence and the complete step by step aspect of the entire investigation, I think that the reader would come to the same conclusion, that indeed it was Lee Harvey Oswald.

(EO) Thank you. Thank you, Judy Bonner; thanks for this good visit, and thanks for a book as clearly factual and as wonderfully well written as your "Investigation of a Homicide: The Murder of John F. Kennedy," a book of special ~~interest~~ interest, contributing special information to all of us. It's price: \$ 6. 95. We turn now from fact to fiction

(In case you're wondering, KKHI is the local classical music station, with a sprinkling of news, ads for hemorrhoid remedies, and things like this - PLH.)